(a) the details of gods seized at various Airports from January, 1996 till date;

(b) whether the Government have sold these goods;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the procedure adopted for disposal of seized goods?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) to (c). Goods such as gold, silver, Indian & Foreign Currencies, electronic goods, computer parts, cellular phones, precious stones etc., valued at Rs. 8816.42 lakhs were seized at various Airports in the country during the period 1.1.96 to 31.8.96. During the same period Rs. 3505.80 lakhs have been realised by sale of goods seized/confiscated under the Customs Act, 1962 at various Airports in the Country.

(d) After completion of adjudication proceedings the seized consumer goods which have been confiscated and are ripe for disposal are disposed by retail sale at customs counter or through NCCF and Consumer Co-operative Societies. Bulk or trade goods are either auctioned or sold through tender, while hazardous and dangerous goods are destroyed as per instructions issued by the Ministry. Goods of perishable nature which have limited shelf life are disposed off immediately after seizure itself. Confiscated gold and silver are authorised to be disposed through Customs retail counters at Delhi, Mumbai, Calcutta and Madras.

[Translation]

Information Bureaus of CIL

5647. SHRI VIRENDRA KUMAR SINGH : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) the names of the places in the country where Information Bureaus of Coal India Ltd. have been set up;

(b) the annual expenditure incurred by Coal India on its Information Bureaus; and

(c) the objectives behind setting up of these Bureaus?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH) : (a) As per information received from Coal India Limited, no Information Bureau has been set up by the Company.

(b) and (c). Do not arise in view of answer to part (a).

Interest Rates on Loans for Backward Classes

5648. SHRI O.P. JINDAL :
SHRI GANGA CHARAN RAJPUT :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have formulated any scheme to provide loan to people belonging to backward classes at lower rates of interest;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are aware that public sector banks hesitate in giving loan to the people of backward classes living in rural areas; and

(d) the remedial steps proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Under the Differential Rate of Interest (DRI) Scheme, banks grant loan to eligible borrowers in the weaker sections at a concessional rate of interest of 4.0 per cent per annum.

(c) and (d). Reserve Bank of India have reported that they have not received any specific complaint regarding public sector banks' hesitation/reluctance to give loans to persons of backward classes residing in rural areas.

[English]

Share of Export Earnings to States

5649. SHRI ANANTH KUMAR : Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Union Government propose to give a share of foreign exchange earned through exports to States so as to ensure greater involvement of State Governments for boosting exports in their respective States;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI BOLLA BULLI RAMAIAH) : (a) to (c). Export earnings accrue to the exporters only and the foreign exchange equivalent thereof is reckoned and strengthens the nation's overall balance of payments. States stand to gain from encouraging export oriented units through the linkages these offer to technological upgradation, foreign investments, expansion of employment and heightened competitive advantages.

Bogus Exporters

5650. SHRI P.R. DASMUNSI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Customs Authority in Bombay detected 170 exporters who had shown bogus exports documents to export PFY Yarns, cloth having weight with a view to get more advance licence etc;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken or proposed to be taken by Government in regard thereto ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM) : (a) and (b). Yes, Sir. The Customs authorities have investigated suspected cases of export frauds by 178 exporters and identified 111 exporting firms who have induldged in bogus or mis-declared exports. Out